

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-14 T-03 OMB-01 AID-20 DPW-01 IO-12 RSR-01

/140 W

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O R 191250 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3120

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSL UDORN

USDEL FRANCE

USIA

SECDEF

DIRNSA FT GG MEADE MD

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC HAWAII

CDRUSMACV

COMUSMACTHAI

DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI

CDR USSAG NKP

DEPCDR 7/13 AF

CDR 7 TH RFRS RAMASUN THAI

CDR 7 ACCS KORAT

DODSPECREP BANGKOK

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DODSPECREP NKP
CHSPECACTS BANGKOK
56 SOW NKP
432 TRW UDORN
CDR JCRC NKP
ARMA/ AIRA VTN LAOS
ARMA/ AIRA SVKT LAOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2016

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PINS, PINT, PFOR, LA
SUBJECT: LAO SITUATION REPORT - MARCH 19

CINCPAC FOR POLAD; MACV FOR COMMAND CENTER AND J3 O8;
7/13 AF, 432 TRW AND 56 SOW FOR DO/ DI; MACTHAI FOR J2
AND PAO.

REF: VIENTIANE 1976

BEGIN SUMMARY: MILITARY- GROUND ACTIVITY REMAINED
MODERATELY HIGH DURING TWO- DAY WEEKEND PERIOD 16-18
MARCH. THERE WERE FIVE MAJOR INCIDENTS: TWO NORTHEAST
OF KHONG SEDONE WHERE FRIENDLY ATTEMPTS TO REASSERT
VILLAGE CONTROL DREW SHARP ENEMY RESPONSE; TWO SOUTH OF
THAKHEK WHEN FRIENDS FIRED OVER 400 ARTILLERY ROUNDS IN
AREA OF CONTINUED CONTACT, BUT NOT IN DIRECT TROOP SUPPORT;
AND ONE SOUTHEAST OF PDJ, WHEN ENEMY ATTAC
ED UNIT ATTEMPTING
TO CONSOLIDATE RLG CONTROL OF THA VIANG AREA. THERE WERE
ALSO 12 MINOR SCATTERED CLASHES AND SHELLINGS. RLAF
FLEW 51 T-28 SORTIES ON 17 AND 18 MARCH, ALL IN SOUTH
LAOS AND NERLY ALL IN SUPPORT OF TROOPS IN AREAS OF
CONTINUED FIGHTING. PTLITICAL - MARCH 19 POLITICAL
AND MILITARY GROUP MEETINGS CANCELLED. PRIMIN REPLIES TO
ASSEMBLY' S QUESTIONS RE VIENTIANE AGREEMENT, AND OFFERS TO
PRESENT RLG MINISTERS IN NEW PGNU FOR ASSEMBLY APPROVAL.
LPF ACKNOWLEDGES EXISTENCE OF HITHERTO CLANDESTINE LAO
PEOPLES' REVOLUTIONARY PARTY. CANADIAN FORMIN SHARP VISITS
MARCH 17-18. THAI DEPUTY FORMIN VISIT MARCH 20-22 ANNOUNCED.
END SUMMARY.

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1. SECTION I - OBSERVANCE OF CEASEFIRE

A. MR I: NO GROUND OR AIR ACTION REPORTED.

B. MR II: ONE MAJOR GROUND INCIDENT AND NO AIR ACTIVITY REPORTED 17-18 MARCH. EARLY MORNING 18 MARCH (172300 Z), FRIENDLY UNIT OPERATING 10-12 KM NORTHEAST OF THA VIANG (UG 370155) UG 34177 AND UG 379159) WAS ATTACKED BY ESTIMATED TWO ENEMY COMPANIES SUPPORTED BY MORTAR, RECOILLESS RIFLE AND ROCKET FIRE. FRIENDLIES WITHDREW SLIGHTLY SOUTHWEST WITH ONE WIA; ENEMY CASUALTIES UNKNOWN. ONLY OTHER ACTION WAS MINOR CLASH NORTHEAST OF PA DONG EVENING 17 MARCH (NO CASUALTIES). IN CONTINUATION OF PREVIOUSLY- REPORTED LOW LEVEL CONTACTS NORTHEAST OF LONG TIENG, FIVE FRIENDS MET SIX ENEMY AT LATTER'S INITIATIVE AND HELD SHORT, CONGENIAL DISCUSSION ON 18 MARCH.

C. MR III FIGHTING CONTINUED SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST OF THAKHEK AND FLARED UP NORTH OF DONG HENE. IN WHAT APPEARED TO BE TWO MAJOR FRIENDLY- INITIATED CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS, FRIENDS FIRED TOTAL OF 436 ARTILLERY ROUNDS AGAINST ENEMY TROOP CONCENTRATIONS VICINITY VILLAGE AREA APPROX 16 KM SOUTH OF THAKHEK (VE 825085) ON 16 AND 17 MARCH. LOCAL COMMANDER CLAIMS VILLAGE IS ABANDONED; SEVERAL ENEMY- INITIATED INCIDENTS HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN THIS AREA DURING THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS. THERE WERE SIX MINOR INCIDENTS 15-20 KM SOUTH AND 20-35 KM SOUTHEAST OF THAKHEK ON 16 AND 17 MARCH-- FIVE CLASHES AND ONE SPORADIC ATTACK BY FIRE (ONE FRIENDLY WIA, ESTIMATED THREE ENEMY WIA). TWO MINOR CLASHES ALSO OCCURRED APPROX 11 KM NORTH (REFTEL) AND

16 KM NORTHEAST OF DONG HENE ON 16 MARCH (TWO FRIENDLY KIA, THREE ENEMY KIA, ESTIMATED FIVE WIA). RLAF FLEW NINE T-28 SORTIES ON 17 MARCH AND FIVE SORTIES ON 18 MARCH, EIGHT IN SUPPORT OF TROOPS IN CONTACT NORTH OF DONG HENE AND SIX AGAINST TRUCKS MUCH FURTHER NORTHEAST OF DONG HENE, SOUTHEAST OF MAHAXAI, APPROX 20 KM FROM NEAREST FRIENDLY FORCES (ONE TRUCK DESTROYED, ONE DAMAGED).

D. MR IV: FRIENDS CONTINUED TO CONTEST CONTROL OF VILLAGE
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NORTHEAST OF KHONG SEDONE, THEREBY DRAWING SHARP ENEMY RESPONSE. THERE WERE TWO INCIDENTS IN THE AREA, BOTH MAJOR: ESTIMATED BATTALION- SIZE ENEMY ATTACK, SUPPORTED BY MORTAR/ RECOILLESS RIFLE FIRE, DROVE FRIENDS FROM POSITION APPROX 34 KM NORTHEAST OF KHONG SEDONE

(XC 150420) MIDDAY 17 MARCH (0515 Z). FRIENDS SUFFERED TWO KIA, FIVE WIA PLUS TWO RADIOS, TWO M-16' S AND ONE MORTAR LOST, AND CLAIMED ENEMY LOST 25 KIA AND 32 WIA. TWO PATROLS FROM SAME FRIENDLY UNIT CLASHED WITH ENEMY PLATOON, SUPPORTED BY 75 ROUNDS MORTAR FIRE, APPROX 33 KM NORTHEAST OF KHONG SEDONE (XC 143417) MORNING 18 MARCH (FOUR ENEMY KIA). ELSEWHERE, THERE WERE FOUR MINOR INCIDENTS, ALL CLASHES SOUTHWEST OF PAKSONG. THREE OCCURRED ON 16 MARCH PRIOR TO MAJOR ATTACK (REFTTEL); ONE OCCURRED ON 17 MARCH (ONE ENEMY KIA, TWO WIA). RLAF FLEW 12 T-28 SORTIES ON 17 MARCH AND 25 SORTIES ON 18 MARCH, ALL IN FOREGOING AREAS OF ACTIVITY AGAINST ENEMY TROOPS AND HEAVY WEAPONS. THREE AC-47 SORTIES SUPPORTED TROOPS IN CONTACT IN SAME AREAS DURING NIGHT 16-17 MARCH.

E. MR V: NO GROUND OR AIR ACTION REPORTED.

F. COUNT OF CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS: RLG DEFMIN ANNOUNCED EIGHT ADDITIONAL ENEMY VIOLATIONS, BRINGING TOTAL TO 256 AS OF MORNING 16 MARCH.. OUR COUNT OF GROUND ACTIONS INITIATED BY BOTH SIDES SHOWS 56 MAJOR AND 340 MINOR INCIDENTS THROUGH 15 MARCH.

2. SECTION II- POLITICAL SITUATION

A. INTERNAL TALKS: MEETINGS OF JOINT RLG/ LPF POLITICAL AND MILITARY GROUPS SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 19 WERE CANCELLED, APPARENTLY BECAUSE AN UNIDENTIFIED MEMBER OF LPF DELEGATION DIED OVER THE WEEK-END. WEEKLY " TUESDAY" TALKS ARE EXPECTED TO BE HELD MARCH 20, WITH POLITICAL AND MILITARY GROUPS SCHEDULED TO MEET NEXT MARCH 21.

B. PR MIN REPLIES TO ASSEMBLY: PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA 15 MARCH PROVIDED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WITH A SERIES OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON VIENTIANE AGREEMENT WHICH ASSEMBLY ADDRESSED TO HIM MARCH 3. AMONG OTHER THINGS, SOUVANNA
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SAID AGREEMENT WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO ASSEMBLY FOR APPROVAL, BUT NOT FOR FORMAL RATIFICATION SINCE IT IS NOT IN INTERNATIONAL TREATY. HE ADDED THAT, WHILE RLG MINISTERS IN NEW PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNION WOULD BE PRESENTED BY SOUVANNA FOR PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL, LPF MINISTERS WOULD NOT. SOUVANNA CONCLUDED THAT IF HE WAS AGAIN NAMED PRIME MINISTER, FORMATION OF NEW PGNU WOULD BE NOTHING MORE THAN SIMPLE RESHUFFLE.

C. LAO PEOPLES REVOLUTIONARY PARTY ACKNOWLEDGED: FBIS MARCH 16 REPORTS MESSAGES FROM KAYSONE PHOMVICHANE AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF LAO PEOPLES' REVOLUTIONARY PARTY TO SOVIET PARTY SECGEN BREZHNEV AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF VIETNAM WORKERS' PARTY WHICH INCLUDE FIRST REFERENCES TO LAO PEOPLES' REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (I. E., LAO COMMUNIST PARTY) THAT WE HAVE HEARD BROADCAST OVER RADIO PATHET LAO. BROADCAST SUGGEST LAO COMMUNIST MOVEMENT HAS MADE FUNDAMENTAL DECISION THAT LAO SITUATION NOW PERMITS HITHERTO CLANDESTINE PARTY TO EMERGE INTO PUBLIC VIEW TO ESTABLISH ITSELF IN VANGUARD OF REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT.

D. VISIT CANADIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SHARP: CANADIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SHARP AND PARTY ARRIVED VIENTIANE AFTER- NOON MARCH 17, DEPARTED FOLLOWING MORNING. SHARP MET WITH PRIMIN, WHO LATER TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT HE CLEARLY CONVEYED TO SHARP HIS DESIRE THAT CANADA CONTINUE AS A MEMBER OF THE ICC. SHARP ALSO MET WITH OTHER LAO OFFICIALS AND WITH LPF REPRESENTATIVES. IN DEPARTURE REMARKS, SHARP SAID THAT PRIMIN HAD EXPRESSED HOPE THAT A REACTIVATED AND RE- ENFORCED ICC FOR LAOS MIGHT HAVE 500 MEMBERS.

3. VISIT THAI DEPUTY FOREIGN MIN ANNOUNCED: RLG ANNOUNCED ON MARCH 18 THAT THAI DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER, GEN. CHARTCHAI, WILL PAY A THREE- DAY GOODWILL VISIT TO VIENTIANE MARCH 20-22, DURING WHICH HE WILL MEET AND HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH MANY LAO LEADERS, INCLUDING PRIMIN SOUVANNA. AMONG THOSE ACCOMPANYING HIM WILL BE GENERAL KRIANGSAK. GODLEY

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